

APPENDIX G
OPEN HOUSE/SCOPING MEETING
DISPLAY BOARDS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

WELCOMES YOU

to the
National Environmental Policy Act
(NEPA)
Environmental Impact Assessment

Open House / Scoping Meeting

for the
NiSource Habitat Conservation Plan



Indiana Bat



American Burying Beetle

WELCOME!

**NEPA Environmental Impact Statement
Open House / Scoping Meeting**

Overview of the HCP/ITP and NEPA Processes (continued)

NEPA Compliance

- ◇ For the Service to issue an ITP, it must comply with the **National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)** by evaluating impacts of the proposed federal action, as well as a range of alternatives to this action.
- ◇ There are three possible levels of NEPA review:
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS),
 - Environmental Assessment (EA), or
 - Categorically Excluded from Further Consideration.
- ◇ The level of NEPA review required depends upon whether any Significant Effects to the human environment may result from the proposed action.

Given the proposed magnitude and coverage of NiSource's ITP application and Multi-Species, Multi-State HCP, the Service has determined that an EIS level of review is appropriate.

Overview of the HCP/ITP and NEPA Processes

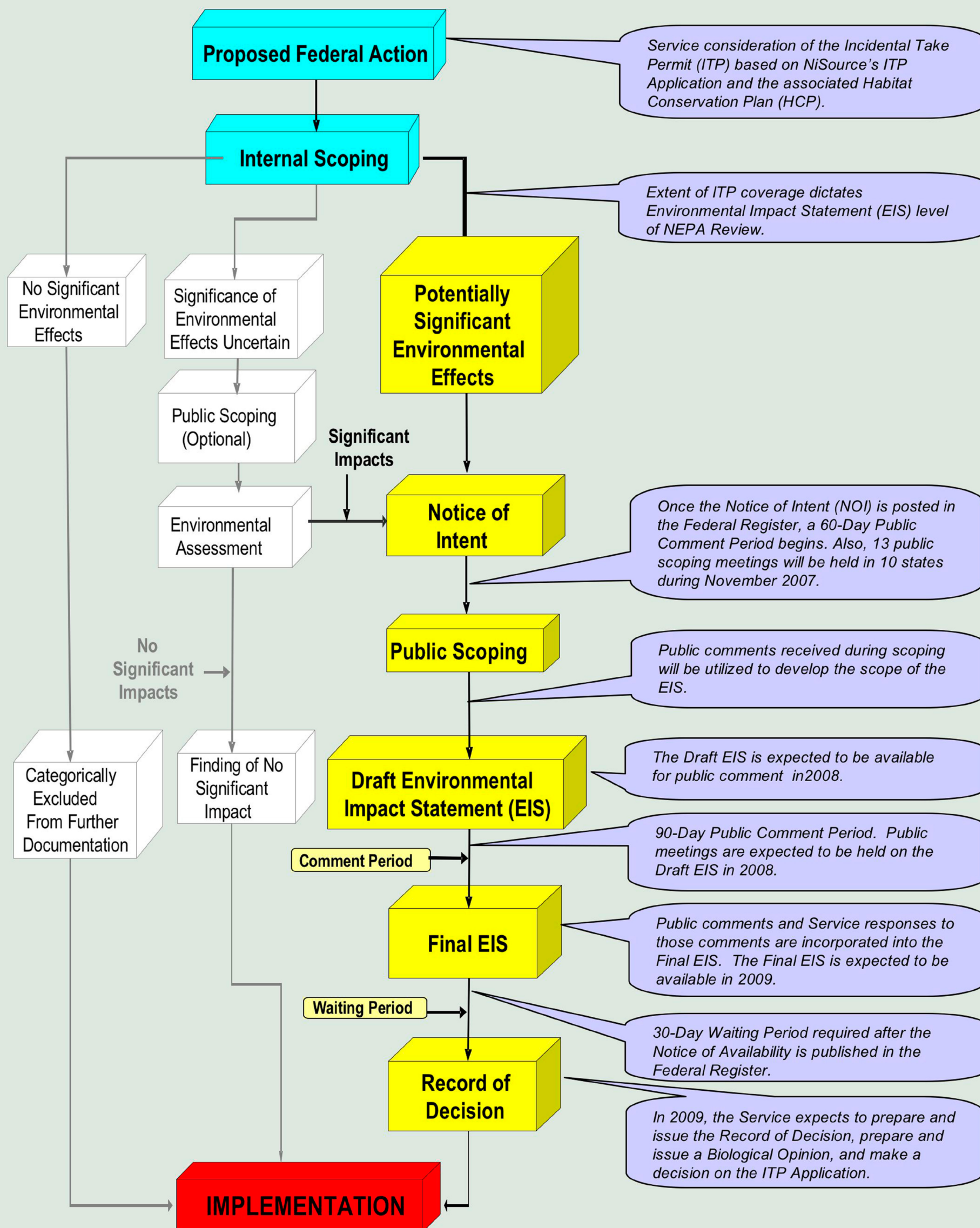
Permitting

- ◇ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service) is responsible for enforcing federal wildlife laws and administering the **Endangered Species Act (ESA)**.
- ◇ Under the ESA, an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) issued by the Service is required to conduct an otherwise lawful activity that may result in the “taking” of a protected species.
- ◇ “Take” is defined as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.”

HCP/ITP Process

- ◇ To qualify for an ITP, the Applicant must submit a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to the Service.
- ◇ The purpose of the HCP is to make sure there is adequate mitigation and minimization of the effects of the authorized incidental “take”.

Overview of the NEPA Process



Types of Impacts That May Be Considered in the HCP and EIS

Direct

- ◇ Temporary removal of occupied habitat
- ◇ Permanent removal of occupied habitat
- ◇ Vehicular collisions – loss of individuals
- ◇ Contaminant exposure (herbicides, etc.)
- ◇ Noise

Indirect

- ◇ Habitat modification (e.g., change to habitat could lead to behavioral changes, result in increased inter-specific competition or an increased risk of predation)



Blue Karner Butterfly



Small-Whorled Pogonia



Brown Pelican

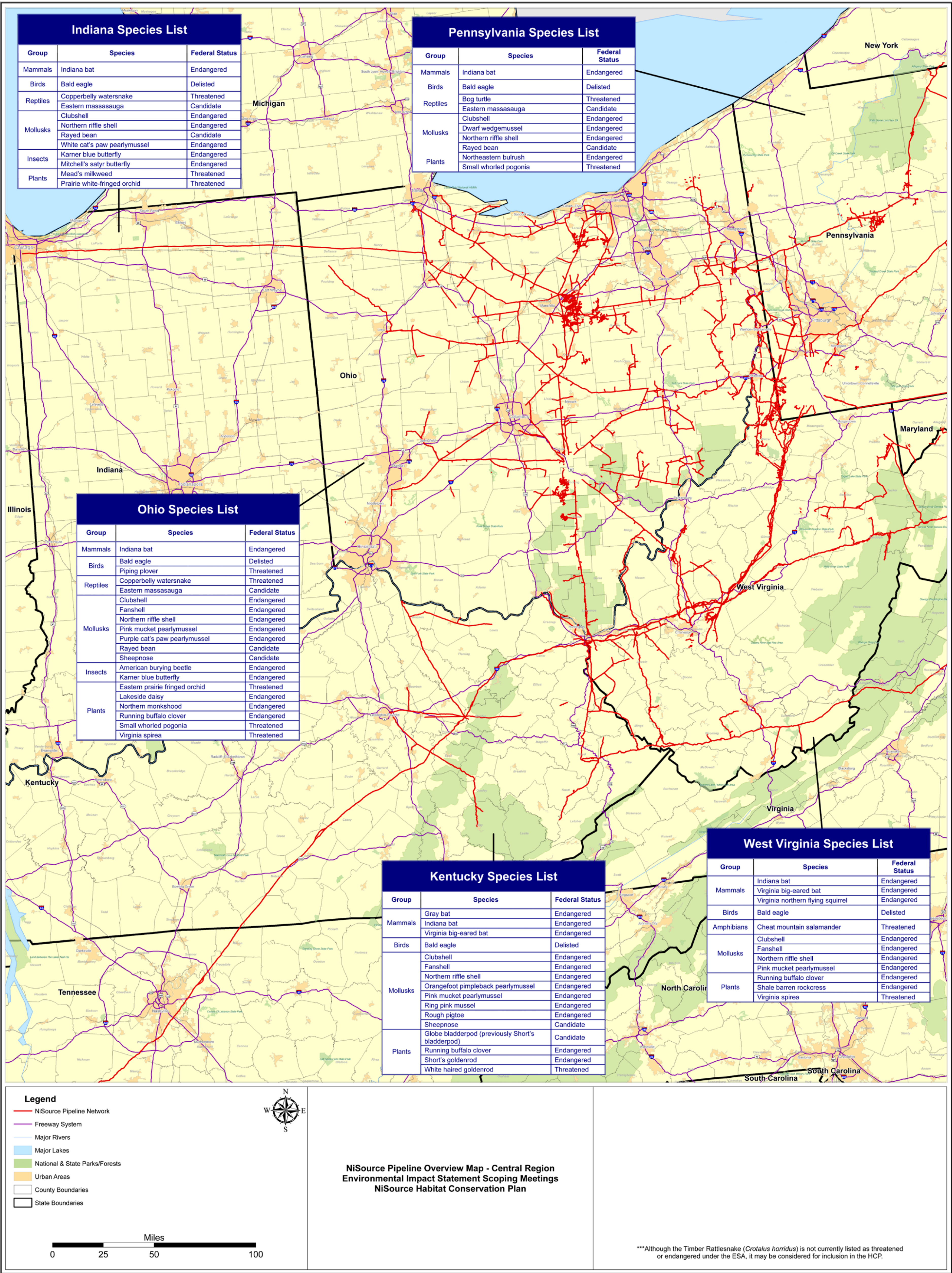
What is NEPA?

- ◇ NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act (1969)
- ◇ **Goals:**
 - Protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the environment
 - Establish a process for federal agencies to implement these goals

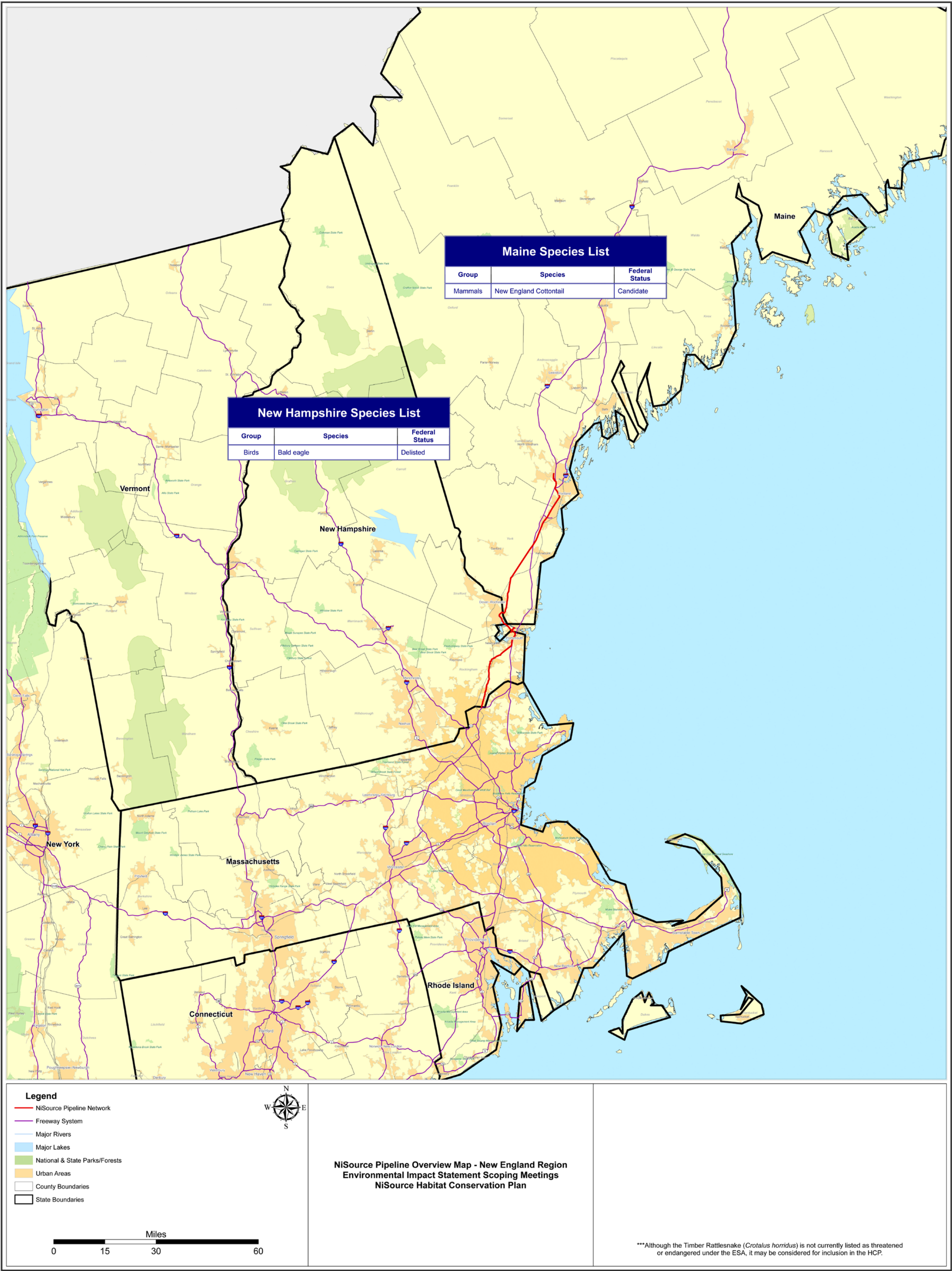
What is an EIS?

- ◇ EIS = Environmental Impact Statement
- ◇ Focuses on significant environmental (biological, physical, and social) impacts of a proposed action and/or alternatives
- ◇ **Includes:**
 - Proposed action
 - Purpose and need for that action
 - Alternatives
 - Affected environment
 - Environmental consequences of the proposed action and alternatives
 - Required mitigation or recommended best management practices

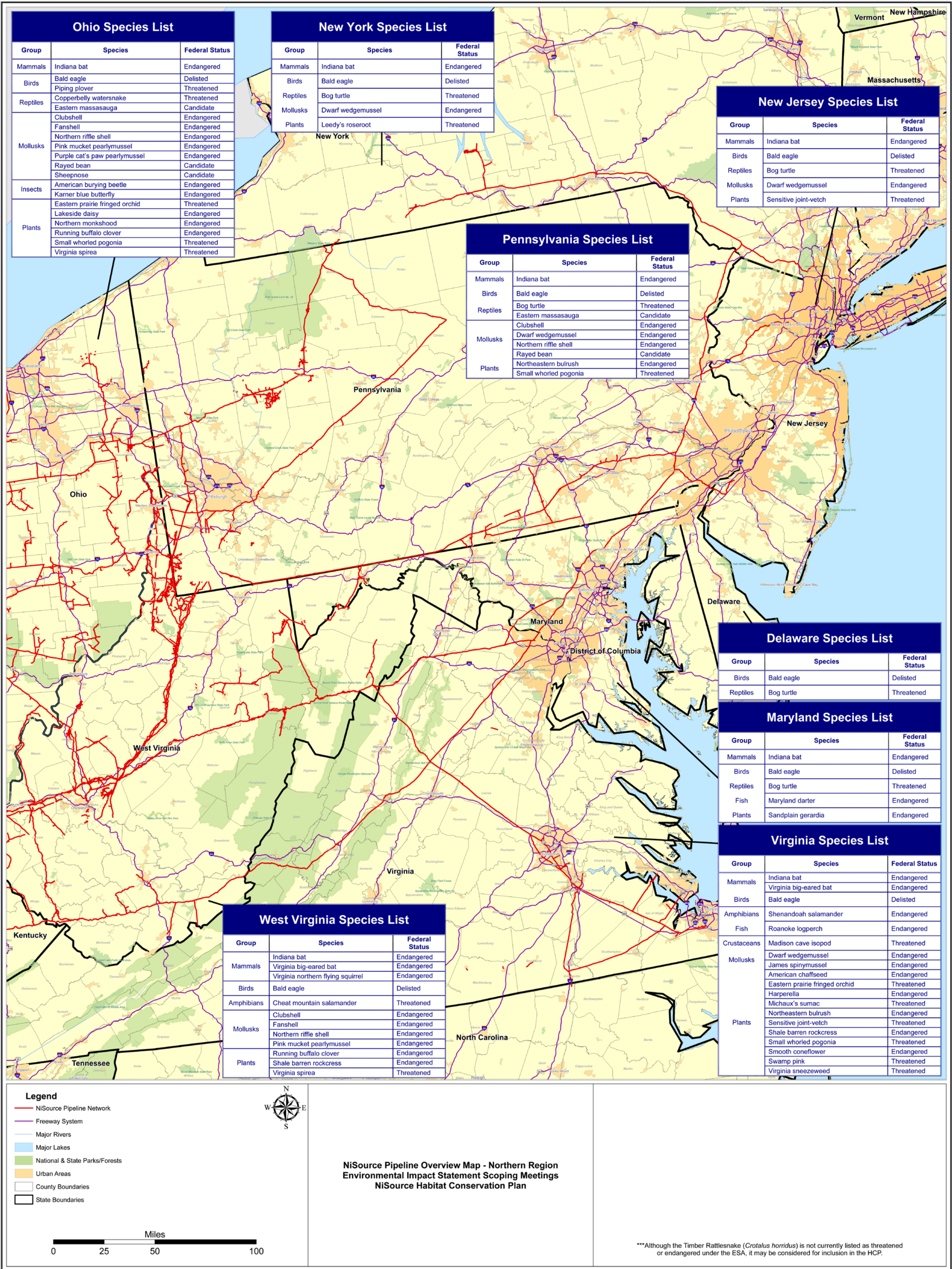
Endangered Species - Central



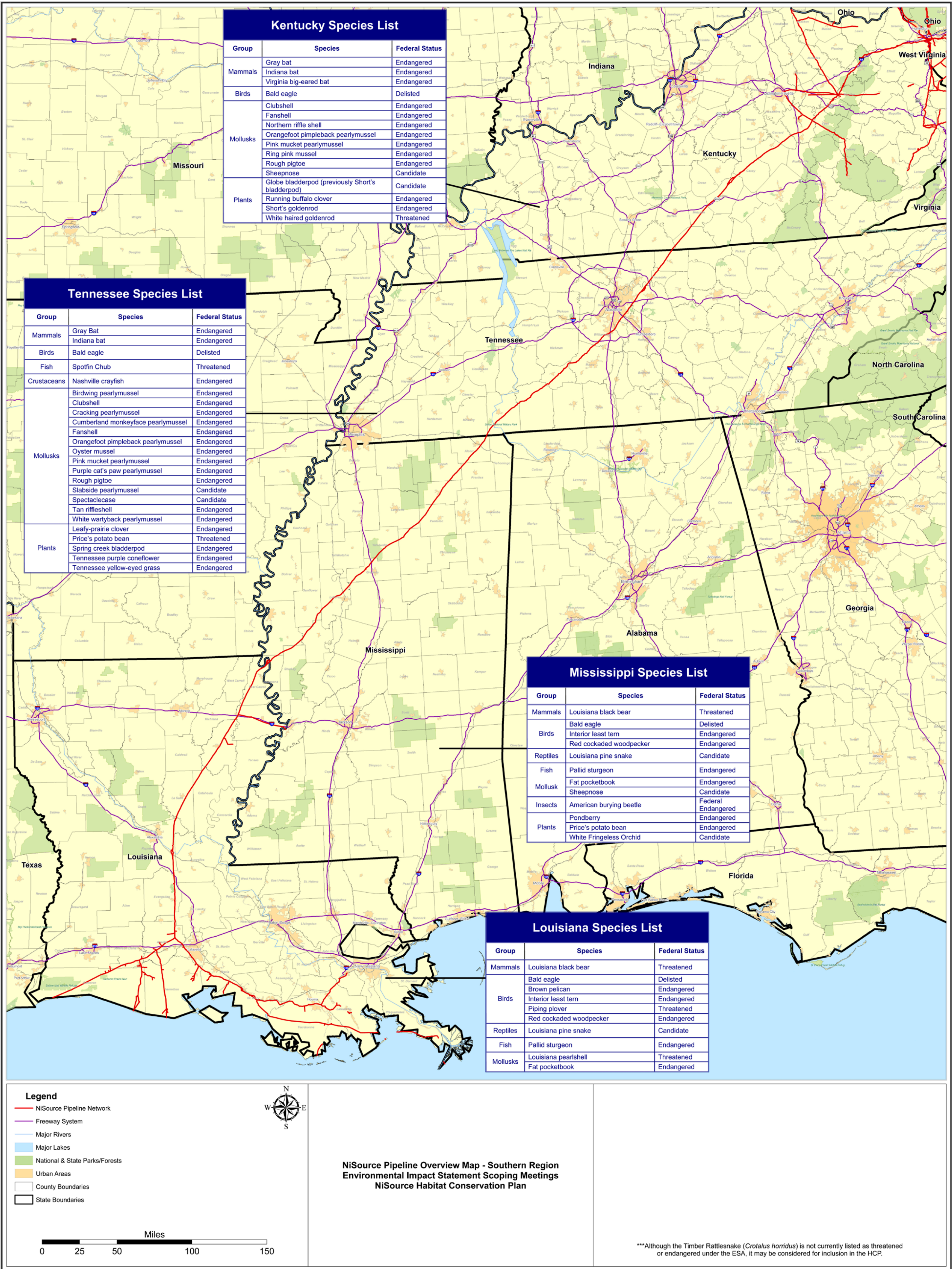
Endangered Species - New England



Endangered Species - North



Endangered Species - South



Proposed Covered Lands, Species, and Activities

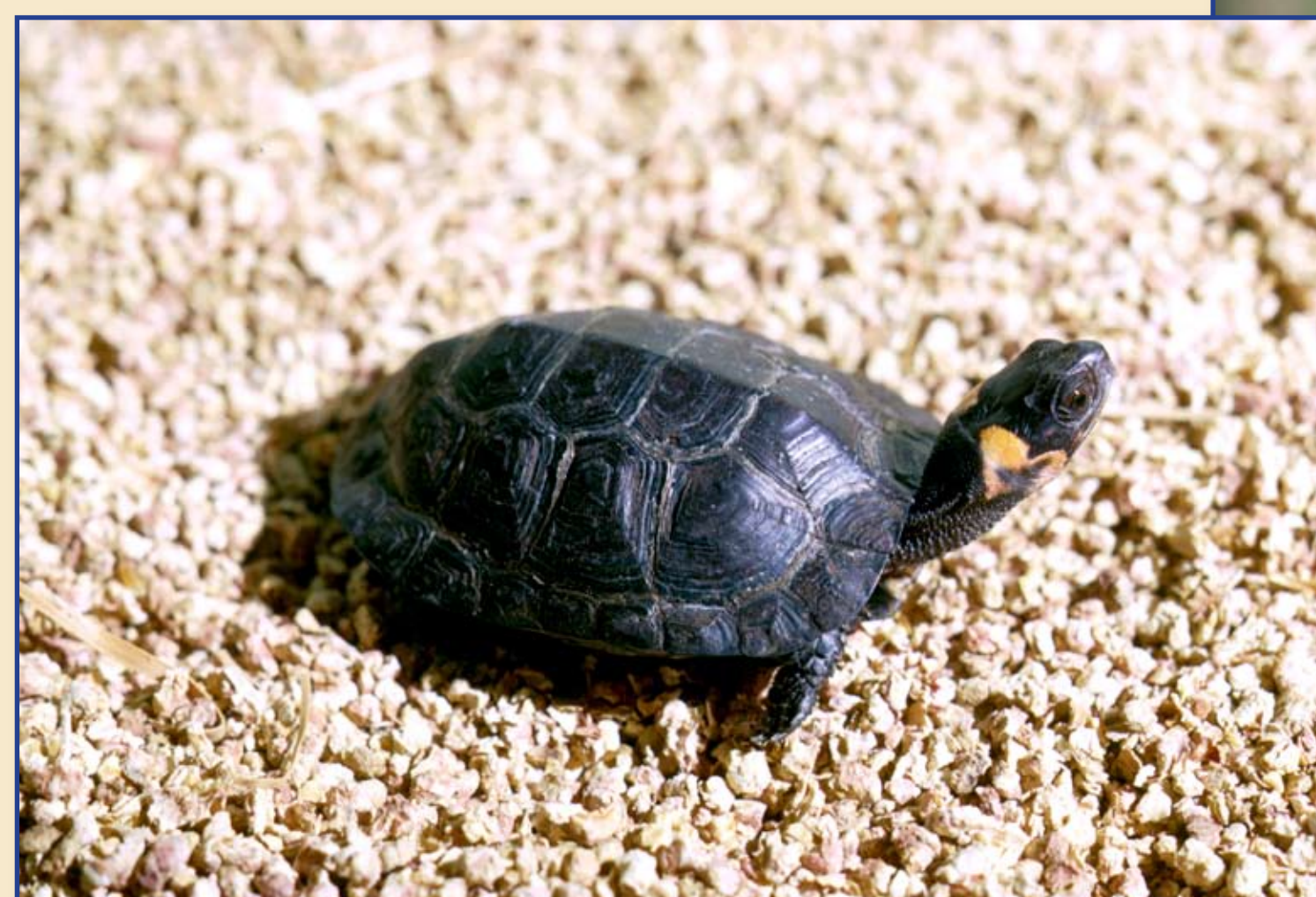
- ◇ **Lands** proposed to be covered in the HCP/ITP Application are presently defined as a 1-mile-wide corridor centered on the Applicant's existing facilities.
- ◇ **Species** that may be included are:
 - Currently listed as federally threatened or endangered, or
 - Have the potential to become listed during the life of this HCP, and have some likelihood to occur within the covered lands.
 - Also, only those species residing on/near-shore and under the purview of the Service will be assessed in the EIS and potentially included in the ITP.
- ◇ **Activities** may include a range of those associated with operations, maintenance, and construction of NiSource's interstate natural gas transmission and storage business.

Types of NiSource Activities That May Be Addressed in the HCP and EIS

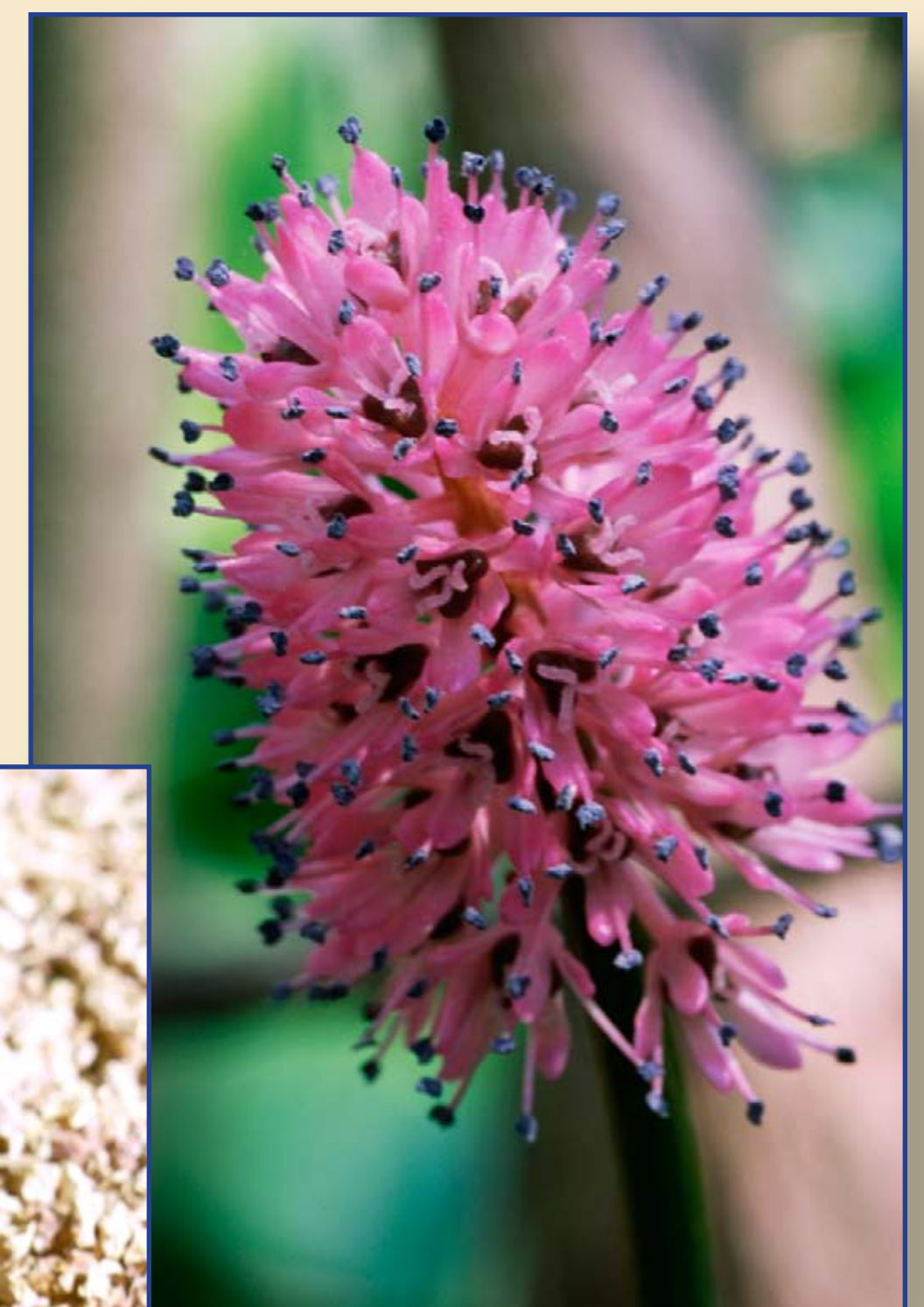
◇ Operations and maintenance:

- Non-earth disturbing facility operation, maintenance, inspections (e.g., vehicle operation)
- Vegetation maintenance (e.g., mowing, herbicide application, tree trimming)
- Vegetation disposal (e.g., dragging, brush pile burning, chipping, hauling)
- Right-of-way repair, regrading, vegetation (e.g., upland, wetland, in-stream stabilization)
- Abandonment by removal (e.g., pipelines, wells)
- Facility inspection (ground or aerial)

◇ Construction-related disturbances associated with new pipelines, compressor stations, storage wells, access roads, and related facilities



Bog Turtle



Swamp Pink